

As a third generation family farmer, I know first-hand the daily challenges our farmers and ranchers face. Agriculture is our way of life and the viability of our region depends on this industry to create jobs and economic opportunity. This is why I have made protecting and growing Valley agriculture a top priority.

Securing a stable supply of water for our farmers and farm communities is central to supporting Valley agriculture. To make sure our farmers have the water they need to put food on America's dinner table and put people back to work, I have pressed the Administration to increase our water allocations, secured federal funding for Valley water projects, and fought the flawed federal regulations that limit the water flowing to our region. Our work to secure our fair share is far from over, but we have made progress. To learn more about my fight for Valley water, click [here](#).

Along with fighting for water, I have worked to ensure that our government recognizes the vital role Valley agriculture plays in our national economy. Our Valley is the leading producer of specialty crops which include tree nuts, fruits, dried fruits, and vegetables. For too long, the Valley did not receive its fair share of federal funds for these kinds of crops. To fix this, I worked with other Valley leaders to secure \$1.7 billion for specialty crops in the 2008 Farm Bill. This was a win for our local economy and success we can build on.

A critical part of Valley agriculture is our dairy industry. In 2009, dairy farms throughout the Valley and nation experienced one of the worst price crises of the last 40 years. America's roughly 65,000 dairies lost over \$12 billion. Sharp losses forced dairy farmers to lay off workers and, in many cases, shutter their operations. To protect Valley jobs and help the dairy industry get back on track, I introduced the Dairy Price Stabilization Act. My plan would promote market stability and individual dairy farmers' ability to grow their own business. To learn more about my plan, click here (link to dairy panel).

I have also worked to reduce some of regulatory burdens placed on Valley farmers and ranchers. Part of my work during the 2008 Farm Bill was to secure addition funding through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program to help farmers convert equipment to newer engines that meet air quality standards and water funding that helped growers install drip irrigation systems. I also support fully repealing the estate tax and have supported legislation that would exempt family farms and ranches from this burden. I know from personal experience the difficulty of protecting your family farm when a family member passes away.

I speak with our Valley's farmers and ranchers on a daily basis to discuss what we can do to strengthen our agriculture industry. Being in close contact has allowed me to respond quickly to our Valley's needs. When the European Grapevine Moth was detected in our Valley, I was able to press the USDA to release \$2.75 million to help our farmers combat this foreign pest. These funds helped mitigate some of the economic impact it had on our summer harvest.

These are only a few examples of my work on behalf of Valley farmers and ranchers. Whether it is fighting for more water, securing additional funding, or advocating for expanding trade opportunities, I will continue to work to help our agriculture economy grow.